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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always on thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

My reply to Mr. Lloyd on the child question is postponed till the next issue.

The "old" men are uneasy over the discovery that the new women are losing faith in the three great M's,—men, marriage, and maternity. The new men, however, know that their own standing with the new women is greatly improved, while maternity is gaining in quality what it loses in quantity. Marriage is the only thing that will go, and neither the new men or the new women will miss it.

The London "prowling prudes" and fanatics have been ignominiously beaten on the question of licensing the music halls. Last year, it will be remembered, these busybodies succeeded in depriving the Empire Theatre of the license to sell drinks, and the moralists of the whole world congratulated themselves on a great victory. Political reverses, it seems, have taught the London county council a salutary lesson, and the protests of the meddlers were ignored this year. May this triumph of common sense prove more lasting than other waves of political sanity!

I lately expressed the opinion that the author of "Merrie England" is not a competent critic in matters of finance. As if to offset this, Mr. Traubel, displaying his customary lack of logic, contrasts my opinion with that of Mr. Henry D. Lloyd,—that Robert Blatchford has written a racy and fetching indictment of the present system, and proposed a remedy in a style well calculated to reach the public ear, and in so doing has shown himself a great educator of public opinion. May I point out to Mr. Traubel that I have not said a word in denial of any of these claims for Mr. Blatchford, and that consequently between Mr. Lloyd's opinion of Mr. Blatchford and mine (so far as I have expressed it) there is no contrast at all?

A flood of gold is predicted by many financial authorities. Owing to the discoveries of new gold fields in South Africa, and improved methods of mining, an enormous increase in the annual output is said to be inevitable. It is remarkable, however, what differences of opinion discussion has disclosed as to the effect of this anticipated glut of gold. Some hail it as nature's cheerful remedy for the evils of a gold system; others predict most disastrous consequences to the business world; others still congratulate the gold-mining industry on the bright prospects of prosperity. No wonder the experts are not allowed to settle the financial problem.

The proposal to give the State a monopoly of the manufacture of matches was recently submitted to the popular vote in Switzerland, and the result was an adverse majority of thirty-five thousand. Some European correspondents aver that the result is due to the apathy and ignorance of the rural voters, who do not know or care anything about factory laws and other restrictions upon greedy capitalists. The "Sun's" London correspondent, however, states that the vote has been preceded by an actual campaign in which the German-speaking State Socialistic cantons were opposed by the French and Italian cantons, and that the proposal was from the first understood to be a test question. If so, the defeat of the measure must be regarded as a setback for Swiss collectivism.

"Rhodes's Journal of Banking" and the "Evening Post" have a new theory in explanation of industrial depression. There is a redundancy of the currency, they assert, and the portion in excess of the amount required for legitimate business has accumulated in the centres and reduced the rates of interest and discount, thus giving rise to intense competition in all kinds of business and rendering trade unprofitable. Only a short time ago all authorities readily admitted the reasonableness of the demand of the south and west for more money, and the question with them was simply how to satisfy the demand in a safe and "sound" way. Those sections have not ceased to cry for more money; how, then, are we to account for the change that has come over the spirit of the speculations of the aforesaid journals?

Governors of several States have been convening legislatures, reforming laws, and calling out troops, to prevent a voluntary encounter between two professional prize-fighters, and a stupid nation has shouted itself hoarse in cheering these glorious battles for virtue and law. At the same time mobs of respectable citizens have been reviving all the horrors of the inquisition and slowly torturing human beings to death in public squares and in the presence of women and children. Yet some editors seriously ask whether our civilization is not a failure! Have they forgotten that there is not a single State or territory in which prize-fighting is now permitted by law, and that lottery gambling is also forbidden everywhere? Have they forgotten Comstock? Surely, in comparison with these supreme evidences of a high state of Christian progress, the burning at the stake of a few niggers is as dust in the balance.

The London "Saturday Review" states that a distinguished correspondent has written to it declaring that "an association for the protection of the public against the police is necessary," and that many other correspondents are complaining of outrages perpetrated by the police. Recently a policeman arrested Professor Ray Lankester on the charge of drunkenness and disorderly conduct, and a magistrate, brutally declining to receive explanations, bound him over to keep the peace. It appears that the professor was "run in" for refusing to "move on" when caught by a guardian of the peace in the act of speaking to an unfortunate woman. The incident is not to be altogether deplored. Professer Lankester has expressed himself in very contemptuous terms, if I remember rightly, in referring to Spencer's ideas of the function of government; he was for more law and greater State control. He has now received an object lesson which may, perhaps, open his eyes to the logic he has affected to despise. It is a good thing, too, to have distinguished correspondents of respectable Tory papers cry out and ask to be saved from their police friends.

A letter from a Denver comrade contains the following paragraph: "I presume you are interested in anything concerning the experiences your 'Instead of a Book' passes through. The other day I brought home a copy from the public library, and, on opening it, found it thoroughly annotated by some religious fanatic. Below the signature of the frontispiece he started in by placing in parentheses the words so familiar to Bible students, 'The Beast.' To this I found the key on the blank space of page 173, where he gave vent to the following: 'No decent man can read this first part and not see Mr. Tucker is a beast and an offence to the world. Think of many Tuckers! Think of such a man given admission to your home and women folk! A rapist, a blackmailer (in belief, at any rate), a free-lover, and libertine. He is a "Moral Leper."' There is hardly a page in the first part on which he has not made some similar commentary. I shall leave it for others to read. Such sentiments will do more good than harm. What think you?" I should almost think that my friend Badcock had become a resident of Denver. My correspondent did quite right in not erasing the annotations. But what is the practice of the Denver librarian in such cases? How does he know that I will not sue him for libel if he continues to give circulation to these slanderous epithets?

Liberty.

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BENJ. R. TUCKER, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Plutocracy Near Its Climax.

A prominent New York lawyer, Mr. Hornblower, who was nominated by the president for the federal supreme court and defeated by the opposition of Senator Hill, has made some remarks on the subject of plutocracy (in an address to the Georgia Bar Association) which have seriously offended the plutocratic press. They are astonished to hear sentiments expressed by a quiet, prosperous, and conservative lawyer which only the Altgelds, Debses, and Mosts are expected to entertain. He spoke of the encroachments of monopoly and the dangers of a social convulsion. He declared that the tendency of the age was plainly in the direction of a centralizing plutocracy, and that the disparity between the rich and the poor will necessarily go on increasing. It is natural that these things should annoy the plutocratic press, and it is also natural that the significant ideas subsequently expressed by Mr. Hornblower should have utterly failed to impress them. Here is what he said further: "I hazard, however, the conjecture that during the earlier part of the coming century this tendency will have reached its climax and will have passed the danger point. The developments of applied science in the mechanical arts during the present century have thus far all been toward greater combinations of capital. . . . The tendency, now, however, seems to be towards the simplification of mechanical contrivances, which will bring back, to a certain extent, individualism. When the dream of aerial travel shall be accomplished—and few doubt that it will be—the rights of way will become literally free as air; no costly roadbeds will be needed, and individual enterprises can once more compete with corporate enterprise." There is a good deal of truth in this, although under the patent laws inventions are either altogether suppressed by monopoly or else are used in the service of a few rather than in the interest of the public. It is proper to recognize the influence of what a French writer has called "the real revolutionists," the inventors and discoverers, but, in order that the public may get more than a minimum of advantage from their work, it is necessary that the other kind of revolutionists, the literary and conscious kind, should bring about such a change in political conditions as will render it impossible for monopoly to intercept the results of scientific and industrial progress.

V. Y.

Free Divorce Not Enough.

Zangwill, the new literary star, has been criticising Grant Allen's "A Woman Who Did." Some of his remarks are very acute, and others rather superficial. Perhaps the most superficial of all is the remark regarding the alleged mistake of Grant Allen and all free-love writers in emphasizing the freedom of union instead of the freedom of disunion. Zangwill says:

> It is, in fact, not at all marriage to which they object, though they think it is. For marriage itself is but the publication of the desire of man and woman to live together as man and wife; the proclamation and registration of the mutual obligations they have entered into. And surely society has some legitimate interest in the doings of its atoms, especially when they wish to coalesce in a social molecule. So clear is this that publication constitutes marriage with many. Jews and Scotchmen have simply to publish the fact to two witnesses to make their marriage legal. Quaker couples marry themselves, standing up hand in hand before the congregation and declaring their desire to live together as man and wife. Yes, to the State, publication is all that marriage means; to the parties themselves it should mean love,—free love; love not bought by gold or compelled by sordid motives; love that, being free, would bind itself. . . . These sentiments are platitudes, and we do not need the free lovers to teach us them. But what they really mean to gird at is not marriage, but the indissolubility of it; and what they should blazon on their banner should not be "free union," but "free disunion." They should attack the "holy estate," in fact, at the other end, leaving the sacred and inexpugnable citadel unbeleaguered. Marriage is free love; half the pother is a foolish word quarrel, a noisy fighting of shadows. But if "free disunion," or, rather, "freer disunion," were to take the place of "free union," the cause would gain more followers.

There are several serious errors in this exhortation. Were Zangwill a little more familiar with actual law, he would know that marriage is, as a rule, more than "publication"; it is subordination of the woman to the man in some important respects. In the matter of children and property marriage has signified an extinction of woman's rights, and, while statutory changes have abolished most of the property disabilities of married women, those with respect to children still survive. In many civilized places woman ceases to own her own body after marriage, and the husband is allowed to discipline and "correct" her in a "reasonable manner" in case of disobedience. Again, Zangwill's off-hand assumption that society has a right to prescribe "publication" of a union indicates insufficient familiarity with the real position of free lovers. They totally deny this "right" to meddle with the "heart-affairs" of the "atoms," and would resist the demand of publication on principle, without reference to the motives of society. Finally, it is simply not true that free lovers have failed to put due stress on the freedom of disunion. By free love they have always intended precisely this freedom of ignoring the State in everything,—union, disunion, reunion, and what not. The demand for *free* love implies a protest against the attempt to *compel* continuance of a love relation when love has disappeared. Indeed, even Grant Allen's heroine emphasizes the freedom of disunion no less than the freedom of union. Zangwill is evidently misled by a phrase, and imputes to free lovers an omission which they have never made.

V. Y.

Loose Laudation of Liberty.

Henry D. Lloyd, whose high-mindedness and sincerity command the respect of all who know him, whether they share his opinions or not, has recently delivered an address before a Boston club on the scholar in politics. According to all accounts, the address was scholarly, graceful, and inspiring. Mr. Lloyd spoke of needed reforms in industry, politics, and government, and in the main the views he expressed were apparently progressive and sound. Unfortunately, however, Mr. Lloyd frequently uses terms without regard to their real meaning, and unconsciously contradicts himself and misleads others. Thus, while insisting on greater political freedom, on freer contracts, on real instead of seeming consent as the basis of political organization, he, in the same breath, also indulged in expressions which, logically interpreted, point to tyranny and compulsion rather than to freedom. Here is one of his characteristic periods, italics mine:

> To be as good as our fathers were we must be better, says Wendell Phillips. We can preserve the liberties we have inherited only by winning new ones to bequeath, another has said. The contract of the voter, the buyer and seller, the laborer, the lover, shall be made free, and the free individual will crown his individuality by uniting with his equal in countless forms of association,—*the State, the most beneficent of all, and the most voluntary*, getting its only authority from "the consent of the governed." It is into this we have had the felicity to be born—the liberty to win these new liberties. In winning the new freedom, we will perfect the former ones. As the republic consummates liberty of conscience by abolishing the State church, the commonwealth will make the republic complete by abolishing the economic entails, primogeniture, privileges, and *rule of force in the distribution of the common product.* The people cannot be politically equal with those upon whom they are *economically dependent.* A single privilege, like a single leak, will founder a ship.

It seeems almost ungracious to criticise this fine period, but a close study of its meaning is really a service both to Mr. Lloyd and his readers. When Mr. Lloyd speaks of the State as the "most voluntary" of all associations, does he contemplate abolition of so-called free government or majority rule? Hardly, for, if he did, he would be an Anarchist. He doubtless strives after many radical reforms in politics, but the one thing that would convert our political organization into a truly *voluntary* association—abolition of compulsory taxation—he has never inserted in his platform. But, if he is in favor of maintaining majority rule, how can he honestly encourage people to regard him as a champion of the voluntary or consent principle in government? The shallow politicians doubtless fail to perceive the distinction between genuine consent and majority rule, and their empty phrases are treated with deserved contempt; but Mr. Lloyd, in justice to himself as well as to those who actually *do* advocate political freedom, ought to weigh his words and take pains to state his position plainly and precisely.

Again, when Mr. Lloyd speaks of economic

dependence or independence, we have excellent reason to think that he uses these terms in the State Socialist sense. He is not a believer in free competition, and economic independence to him means, not equality of opportunity and a field free from legal monopoly, but compulsory coöperation, government control of production, etc. Yet his Boston hearers did not so construe him, and at least some of the liberal praise bestowed upon his address by the Boston press was misdirected, in the sense that the editors, misled by the vagueness of statement, approved something with which they have no sympathy at all. Mr. Lloyd, I am sure, does not seek such praise, and does not value it in the least; yet the editors are not to blame for anything except lack of insight. Their error ought to serve as a warning to Mr. Lloyd in the future. He certainly does not intend to mislead, but there is no way of preventing misinterpretation, save the good old way of saying what one means in the clearest and most exact terms language affords. Perhaps this condition conflicts somewhat with the requirements of eloquence, but Mr. Lloyd will certainly agree with me in placing truth far above effect.

V. Y.

"The Right of Persecution."

The shallow press has lately improved some fine opportunities to air its ignorance or misunderstanding of fundamental principles. Several decisions having been rendered in cases involving the questions of boycotting and blacklisting, the aforesaid press has been impelled to give us the benefit of *its* views of the matter. Two of the decisions have given it entire satisfaction, and to the judicious this fact is sufficient to throw considerable doubt on the rulings of the courts concerned; one decision has been challenged by the same authority, and we may infer that the court was probably right.

Following the order of time, the first case to be mentioned is a Massachusetts action for boycotting, decided by Judge Holmes, a son of Dr. Holmes and a man of progressive tendencies, who has given utterance to more than one radical sentiment. He laid down the rule that "deliberate and combined interference with a man's business by persuading others to have nothing to do with him" was criminal only if the interference was malicious and resorted to with the purely mischievous intention of harming the boycotted person. Interference for a good, legitimate purpose, such as compelling an employer to raise wages, shorten hours, etc., would not be deemed malicious, according to Judge Holmes, and hence the use of moral pressure to prevent other men from making terms with the employer would be justifiable boycotting. Judge Holmes recognized that "the weight of judicial opinion was the other way," but he thought that the old rule was inconsistent with modern ideas of freedom and contract.

This view was applauded by the labor papers and criticised by the plutocratic press. Neither side was right, but the plutocracy's mouthpieces, if more intelligent, might have successfully attacked, not the decision itself, but the logic upon which it was based. Judge Holmes, perhaps, could not have taken more advanced ground in face of the unbroken line of adverse precedents, but on principle it is impossible to justify the introduction of the irrelevant question of motive. When an act is legitimate in itself, no "good purpose" is required to sanction it, and pure boycotting is clearly legitimate in itself. The question is not whether, and for what reason or purpose, boycotters intend to injure, but *how* they intend to injure. If merely by bringing social pressure to bear,—if they seek to render one boycott effective by merely threatening another boycott,—then they do not overstep the bounds of their proper freedom at any point.

The second case, decided in England by Baron Pollock, does not present a clear issue as to the right of boycotting. Libel and breaches of contract constitute important features of the case. The facts are stated as follows:

> The defendants were the managers of a trade union of plasterers, and they had a difference with a master plasterer named Peek, and withdrew their men from his employ. As he was engaged on a contract, another master plasterer, named Wright, lent him some men. The union then attacked Wright by endeavoring to get his men to leave him, and to induce people to break their contracts with him, and by printing and circulating libels against him. They did procure the breach of certain contracts with him, and did prevent his getting employment. He sued for libel, and asked for an injunction. The defence set up was substantially Judge Holmes's,—that there was no malice, that their motives were good, and that they acted from a sense of duty.

The jury found malice, libel, and breaches of contract brought about by the defendants, and rendered a verdict against them. Whatever one may think about the right to publish libels and induce breaches of contract (I do not propose discussing these questions here), it is clear that they are entirely distinct from the right to boycott, and hence the decision cannot be regarded as throwing any light on this latter problem. The charge of the judge, however, was broader than the issue required, and referred to the case of pure boycotting. He laid down this rule:

> No man had a right to do that which injured another man, unless by acts he had a legal right to do. In this country every one had a right to express his opinion clearly with reference to the questions of the day. But, if an individual, in order to enforce his particular views, did an act knowingly and intending to inflict an injury upon another, the law did not allow that to be done. Nor could a man say: "If you don't employ a certain class of people, we shall do certain things which will injure you in your business." The question was: did the defendant say to himself: "I will go to these people and will write such letters as will prevent them from employing Mr. Wright, and then he will be obliged to come to our terms and not to exercise any free will of his own"?

This piece of reasoning is wholly muddled. First we are told that a man *has* a legal right to injure another by acts he has a legal right to do; then we are told that the law does *not* allow the doing of "an act" (that is, any act) with intent to inflict injury upon another. The two propositions flatly and clearly contradict each other. To harmonize them, the second proposition would have to be amended thus: "But, if an individual . . did an [illegal] act knowingly and intending to inflict an injury upon another, the law did not allow that to be done." The question turns, not upon the "injury," but upon the legality of the act. If the act is legal, the injury is a matter of indifference. Now, if a man says: "If you don't employ a certain class of people, we shall do certain things which will injure you in your business," the only question would be as to the nature and quality of these "certain things." In the case of the defendant before Judge Pollock, the question was not whether his letters prevented the employment of Wright, but in what *way* they prevented it,—what they contained. It is one thing to write a libel and thereby secure boycotting, and a quite different thing to secure boycotting by merely threatening withdrawal of favor or suspension of voluntary relations. The letters of the defendant did contain libels and other matters assumed to be illegal *in themselves*, and the decision on these grounds may have been right; but the judge's charge clearly goes beyond these points, and attempts to cover cases of pure boycotting.

Finally, we have a still more recent American case, in which blacklisting was declared illegal. The company defended the act by claiming, in a demurrer, that it merely exercised a simple right in describing the blacklisted man as an undesirable employee, but the judge overruled the demurrer. His reasoning is thus stated in the press reports:

> The right of an employer to prevent an employee from obtaining work ends when he discharges that employee. The right of the employee to obtain work cannot be taken from him, any more than can the right of the employer to hire laborers. The right to sell his labor is the one thing which stands between the workingman and starvation, and it is against public policy for a number of employers to combine to prevent the exercise of this right by any man or body of men. If a man leaves, or is discharged from, the employment of any person or corporation, it is not for his former employer to say whether or not he is a fit person to be employed by another party; that is a matter to be determined by the new employer for himself.

This ruling is a fit and natural complement to the above anti-boycott decisions, and the shallow press has been quick and "astute," as lawyers say, to parade it as significant evidence of the law's impartiality. Impartial, yes; but not intelligent. Labor ought not to congratulate itself upon this alleged evidence of fairness of the courts and be lulled into indifference to the loss of the boycott.

What strikes one about this ruling is the utter lack of any leading principle to which the judge's assertions—for he merely asserts certain things instead of arguing—can be referred. Why the right of an employer ends where he says it does is not explained. Certainly the propositions that the right to work cannot be taken away, and that it is against public policy to prevent the exercise of this right, instead of justifying or explaining the limitation of the employers' right, themselves require justification and explanation. They are question-begging, at best. The question whether the right to work can be taken away cannot be answered generally; everything depends on the *how*. Similarly, it is not always and necessarily against public policy "to prevent" the exercise of the right to work; it depends on the method of the prevention.

Suppose an employer who has discharged a workman is consulted by another employer in regard to the character and qualifications of the workman; would it be illegal for the man thus applied to to give friendly warning to the applicant? It is improbable that any judge would decide in the affirmative. Yet, if it is proper to give such warning upon application,

why is it improper to volunteer it without waiting for applications? Upon what principle is it held that a man cannot caution another against lending money or giving a daughter in marriage (and I presume that the right to lend and borrow, and the right to marry, are as important as the right to work, and that it would be against public policy to prevent their exercise) or offering employment to a given individual? None has been assigned, implied, or hinted at.

One of the editors who has commented approvingly on one of the decisions discussed above has sought to cast discredit upon boycotting by characterizing it as "persecution," and has assumed it to be self-evident that civilized society cannot recognize "the right to persecution." Such appeals to prejudice as are involved in the use of evil-suggesting epithets and terms are eminently calculated to darken counsel and befog the essential issue, but the clear thinker is not misled by the trick. He will not shrink from defending even the right of persecution, when the term covers such forms of persecution as boycotting. Civilized society cannot refuse to recognize this right, unless it is ready to abandon the claim to civilization.

V. Y.

The Woman Who Didn't.

The conversation between Florence and Laura which R. S. Y. reports on another page was still in progress when R. S. Y. left the room. Fortunately I was eavesdropping and heard it to the end. Here is the rest of it.

Florence. Are there any married women among our acquaintances who married rather than live in illegal relations, because thereby they could enjoy an economic independence impossible to a woman who has an acknowledged lover?

Laura. Why, yes; there's Mary Jane, who married Peter.

Florence. Hm! Let me see; Mary Jane has no children, I believe?

Laura. None.

Florence. Am I right, also, in thinking that it was not, and is not, her intention to have any?

Laura. You are.

Florence. And that she knows enough of sexual physiology to enable her to make it, if not absolutely sure, at least highly probable, that her intention will not be thwarted?

Laura. That is also true.

Florence. Then we can hardly allow her to plead anxiety regarding her offspring in extenuation of her choice of a married life.

Laura. But think of the friends that she would have lost, had she chosen to live illegally.

Florence. Is it not true that she has a large circle of friends among people like ourselves,—Anarchists or people only less radical?

Laura. Yes.

Florence. Do you think that many of these would have treated her with less consideration, if she had chosen a more Anarchistic method of life?

Laura. Probably not; but she has also conservative friends whom she values.

Florence. Values conservative friends!

Laura. Certainly. Why do you exclaim? Would you, then, exclude from your circle of friends all people not in agreement with you?

Florence. By no means. But I would not accept, much less value, the friendship of those who would exclude from their circle of friends all people not living in accordance with their views. One who marries to save such friendship cannot, it seems to me, really look upon marriage as the detestable slavery which Mary Jane professes to consider it.

Laura. But what if the aid of such friends were essential to Mary Jane's economic independence?

Florence. That, indeed, is a motive which one might be forced to entertain, though at the expense of pride. But the need of such aid is growing less and less, and is much overrated even now. You and I know women who have had, not one, but several, lovers, and who, nevertheless, in legitimate callings that are dependent on conservative patronage, are supporting, not only themselves, but others. However, let this pass. Granting that such friends are serviceable, was marriage the only way by which Mary Jane could hold them? In your elaborate defence of such women as Mary Jane you seem to have overlooked the fact that it is not absolutely essential to the continuation of the universe, or even of Mary Jane herself, that she should live with Peter, either legally or illegally. As a single woman, could not the "young, intellectual, ambitious, and active" Mary Jane have kept her friends, pursued her profession, achieved economic independence, and satisfied her zeal for freedom and reform?

Laura. Certainly. But she *loved* Peter.

Florence. So you admit that by entering into the slavery of matrimony she gained nothing but Peter. The choice that she made, then, was not between illegal relationship, accompanied by poverty and disappointment of ambition, on the one hand, and, on the other, marriage with its accompanying prosperity and success. Her real choice was between the freedom of celibacy without Peter, and the slavery of marriage with Peter. The case of Mary Jane, which you have been at such pains to defend, may be stated in these simple words: *she wanted Peter more than she wanted freedom.*

T.

The Reformer That Stevenson Forgot.

Four reformers met under a bramble bush. They were all agreed the world must be changed. "We must abolish property," said one.

"We must abolish marriage," said the second.

"We must abolish God," said the third.

"I wish we could abolish work," said the fourth.

"Do not let us go beyond practical politics," said the first. "The first thing is to reduce men to a common level."

"The first thing," said the second, "is to give freedom to the sexes."

"The first thing," said the third, "is to find out how to do it."

"The first step," said the first, "is to abolish the Bible."

"The first thing," said the second, "is to abolish the laws."

"The first thing," said the third, "is to abolish mankind."—*Quoted from R. L. Stevenson by H. L. Traubel in the Conservator.*

Then came a fifth reformer under the bramble bush. He was a conservator—of all things save one. But the exception sufficed to make him a reformer.

"The first thing," said he, "is to abolish reason."

T.

Edgar Fawcett is an independent writer who occasionally displeases Philistia by taking a progressive attitude, but some of his most recent critical utterances are calculated to improve his standing with the respectable majority and disappoint the enlightened minority. His utter failure to comprehend Whitman, exhibited in an article in "The Conservator," indicated an unfortunate intellectual narrowness and littleness, and his estimate of Ibsen proves him to be destitute of all true qualifications for philosophical criticism. Here is what he says: "I admit to a strong dislike of Ibsen, as inartistic, tediously didactic, moralistic, undramatic, clumsy. But I do not hold this impression to be of any more importance than the lavish eulogies of certain professed adorers, who do not know anything more than I know of the tongue that he employs, of the social conditions under which he writes, or of the general Scandinavian atmosphere which has nourished him as a maker of plays." To see how absurd this is, it is but necessary to suggest that Ibsen is not the *only* Norwegian writer translated into a language known to Mr. Fawcett, and that mere comparison of Ibsen to other Norwegian writers ought to enable a trained literary philosopher to judge whether the "general Scandinavian atmosphere" accounts for the traits alleged to be found in Ibsen. Of course, as a matter of fact, no trained critic will ever resort to any such method, for he will never be silly enough to think that anything in the atmosphere of an old nation, with a history, civilization, and literature, will cause a great writer (and even Mr. Fawcett will admit that Ibsen is no third-rate scribbler) to be inartistic and clumsy. The question is simply one of fact: *is* Ibsen clumsy and undramatic? If he is, he is not a great dramatist, and no "atmosphere" is necessary to account for it. Mr. Fawcett lacks the courage of his opinions; he mistrusts his own instincts and impressions. Considering their nature, it is well that he does so. The deficiency is in himself, not in Ibsen. Any proper application of true critical tests and principles shows Ibsen to be a consummate dramatist and artist, as even some of his enemies are forced to admit.

Matthew Marshall makes a good point *à propos* of the current talk of financiers regarding the necessity of the government's retirement from the banking business. He writes in the "Sun": "There is something pitiable in the child-like simplicity with which the eminent bankers, convened at Atlanta, Georgia, are urging the country to increase the interest-bearing debt of the nation by the sum of $500,000,000 for the purpose of retiring the legal-tender notes and turning over to the banks the profitable business of issuing paper currency. These worthy gentlemen live in an atmosphere so exclusively peculiar to themselves that they cannot understand why any citizen should be unwilling to make the nation pay $15,000,000 a year forever, in order that the dividends upon the bank stock should be correspondingly increased. Some of them even go so far as to propose that the government should guarantee the payment of their circulating notes in order to make them more acceptable to the public, and, while with one breath they insist that the government should go out

of the banking business, with the next they ask that the same government should take charge of all the banks in the country, act as their redemption agent, and, in case of the insolvency of any of them, collect its assets and pay its debts." Of course, Matthew Marshall is guilty of the fallacy that the greenbacks constitute a "cheap" form of currency and bear no interest. As a matter of fact, there is some reason to believe that they are largely responsible for the late bond issues; hence they "cost" the interest on the bonds. But the inconsistency of the banking reformers is well brought out by him. It is preposterous for these alleged reformers to pretend that they want free banking. Free banking means banking with which the government has no more to do than it has with the manufacture and sale of shoes and hats. The true adherent of free banking relies on competition and public prudence or self-interest for the prevention of unsound financiering, not on government supervision and warranty.

Refusal to engage in controversy is a policy whose practice is easily forgotten by its professors. Liberty has already pointed out that Mr. Traubel, of the "Conservator," has such a rule. When I make a criticism on one of his public utterances, he does not answer, taking the ground that controversy is unprofitable. Instead of this, he reprints my criticism, and beside it places a quotation from some other writer expressing what Mr. Traubel supposes to be an opposite view. The question occurs to me: wherein does this differ from controversy? If answer to criticism is profitless *per se*, why is it well for Mr. Traubel to answer me in the words of another, and ill to answer me in his own words? I find inconsistency here. And I find it again when he *expressly invites* Mr. John Burroughs to *reply* in the "Conservator" to a severe criticism passed upon Whitman's poetry by Mr. Edgar Fawcett. One can hardly doubt that Mr. Traubel is quite honest in his disbelief in controversy. But such is poor human nature that, when he desires to answer, he forgets this disbelief entirely, remembering it again only when he prefers not to answer. I am reminded of the ancient music-hall joke of the farmer who, being asked how he managed to dispose of his enormous crop of fruit, answered: "We eat what we can, and what we can't we can." All unconsciously Mr. Traubel follows quite another rule in disposing of the considerable crop of opposing considerations which his illogical utterances call forth: "We answer what we can, and what we can't we won't."

The growth of Anarchistic influence is to be seen in the constant outcropping of Anarchistic opinions in the popular press. My recent reprint from the "Brickbuilder" is a case in point, and "Puck" and "Town Topics," quoted in this issue, furnish instances equally notable.

Mr. John Henry Mackay writes me the good news that he and other comrades are about to start an Anarchistic reading-room in Berlin. To help him in this work, I suggest to Liberty's friends that they make contributions to this enterprise, of literature having Anarchistic tendencies,—books, pamphlets, periodicals. Works written in German are preferable for this purpose, but any in English or French are also very acceptable. Such contributions may be sent by mail to "John Henry Mackay; Wusterhausenerstrasse, 12, II, Berlin, SO; Germany."

Father and Son.

[Pierre Wolf in Le Journal.]

Son. Did you send for me, father?

Father (furious). Yes. Sit down there.

Son. What is it that you wish?

Father. What is it that I wish? And you ask that? You dare to ask that? You certainly cannot be in any doubt about it. What time did you come in last night?

Son. Last night? Why, about midnight.

Father. And what did you do in the evening? Now, don't hunt for an answer, but answer.

Son. You don't give me time. Well, I took a walk.

Father. You took a walk . . . and with whom?

Son. With comrades.

Father. Really! And where did you go?

Son. To the *café*. We played billiards, and I won. Jules tore the cloth.

Father. Ah! he tore the cloth! And did you sleep at home?

Son. Naturally.

Father (beside himself). It is false! You slept somewhere else. And, if you continue the life that you are leading, I will disown you.

Son. But, father. . . .

Father. There is no "But, father," about it. You did not go out with your comrades, you did not play billiards, and your Jules tore nothing at all.

Son. Oh! papa!

Father. Now, let me tell you what you did. You went to the *café-concert* with a woman,—a *cocotte*, no doubt.

Son. In the first place, she is not a *cocotte*.

Father. *Cocotte* or not, she was a woman, . . . and at your age it is shameful!

Son. Really!

Father. I was there, and I saw you.

Son. That being the case, I prefer to confess.

Father. Luckily.

Son. I, too, saw you. The woman, too, saw you.

Father. What song are you singing me now?

Son. And, as soon as I noticed you, I wanted to go away. Then she asked me why. I pointed to you, saying: "There's my father; let's be off!" Well, do you know what she answered? "Your father, he? Why, that's my old man of last Tuesday!"

(*A voice is heard outside.*)

Father (very pale). Hush! your mother's coming.

Missions and the State.

To the Editor of Liberty:

Since the British government is the only civilized one that has the reputation of generally doing well on mission fields, an extract from the "Church Missionary Intelligencer" (London) will form an interesting appendix to my recent article on government and missions. It should be understood that, owing to disturbances arising from religious dissension in Uganda, the British protectorate undertook to assign half the country to the Protestants and the other half to the Catholics. The Catholic missions had been under French leadership, but the pope has now replaced the French bishop by an Englishman, whose diocesan boundaries disregard the aforesaid division. Here follows my clipping:

Colonel Colville and the foreign office consider that this new delimitation puts an end to Sir Gerald Portal's division of Uganda into Protestant and Roman Catholic, and throws open both halves freely to the missionary enterprise of both. The "Illustrated Catholic Missionary News" considers that religious freedom is proclaimed over all British Uganda. In other words, Roman diplomacy has been allowed to dictate to and override the arrangements of the English government officials.

Take notice, admirers of British liberality. In the words of a British authority, which itself evidently sides with the government in this matter, to "proclaim religious freedom" is "to dictate to and override the arrangements of the English government officials."

The American Board's "East Central African Mission," near Mashonaland, in the country lately conquered by the British and governed by the Char[illegible] Company, is having its first taste of civilized government. They write:

A resident magistrate has arrived, and we hope the district will be better governed. We shall have several grievances against the company's officials. These we are making every effort to have righted.

It is clear that "hope for something better" is the most prominent feeling yet aroused by this government.

STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

A Practical Step Toward Anarchism.

[Town Topics.]

I will bet a five-cent cigar against the complete works of James Whitcomb Riley—my confidence is so great that I have no hesitation in offering these enormous odds—that, if Silas Wright or William H. Seward were alive to-day and duly described and registered, he would not know how to vote under the provisions of our present interesting ballot law. It is a work of genius that I must commend. I approve cordially any restrictions or rigmarole of statute that tend to make voting more difficult or uncertain. The existing ballot act is admirable, for it enables you to be unsure whether you have voted or not as you wished to vote, and you will come away from the polls with no great confidence that you have expressed your wishes, or, indeed, that your vote will be counted at all. This is as it should be, and no true reformer would wish it otherwise. In the course of a few years the majority of people will get tired of voting. They will keep away from the polls. Voting, like nomination, will be entirely in the hands of the experts. Spasmodic and hysterical reforms will have no chance. Some day we may reach that happy condition that I have long desired. The useless and tedious formality of balloting will be dispensed with. Elections will be decided by shaking poker dice, a bicycle race, a bout of fisticuffs, a cake walk, a quail-eating match, the best three out of five at pinochle, or in some other practical, certain, and manly manner. Every law or practice that helps to beat into the skulls of the American people that they have nothing to do with the government of the United States and to withhold them from the senseless process of voting should be encouraged.

Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.

The Secretary wants every reader of Liberty to send in his name for enrolment. Those who do so thereby pledge themselves to write, when possible, a letter every fortnight, on Anarchism or kindred subjects, to the "target" assigned in Liberty for that fortnight, and to notify the secretary promptly in case of any failure to write to a target (which it is hoped will not often occur), or in case of temporary or permanent withdrawal from the work of the Corps. All, whether members or not, are asked to lose no opportunity of informing the secretary of suitable targets. Address, STEPHEN T. BYINGTON, Flushing Institute, Flushing, N. Y.

Very few targets have been sent in lately. Give us more of them.

Those who said that, as soon as summer was over, they would join the Corps, or resume dropped work, are requested to look out of the window at the branches of the trees.

Target, section A.—"Saturday Union Record," St. Louis, Mo., a labor paper. Show what labor has to hope for from reform along Anarchistic lines.

Section B.—Mary P. Irving, Flushing, N. Y., editor of "The Way," a small monthly of State Socialist tendencies, but willing to give others a hearing. In October, in an editorial on Single Tax, she said:

Some of these [Single Taxers] hate Socialism as the devil is supposed to hate holy water. They call themselves individualists, or philosophical Anarchists. They seem not to understand that Anarchism, however beautiful it may appear as the philosophy of an unsocial existence, is impossible of realization in human society.

Show that Anarchism is neither the philosophy of an unsocial existence or impossible of realization in human society. It may also be pertinent to explain that Anarchism is not a branch of the Single Tax.

STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

"The Woman Who Did."

Florence. I have hardly been able to do anything since Herminia's death. Day and night I find myself thinking about her. How I did love and admire her! The news of her death almost killed me, it came so suddenly and so unexpectedly.

Laura. It was not so unexpected to me. I had often thought that, if some day Dolores disappointed her mother, in not being able or desirous to "regenerate humanity," there would be nothing left for Herminia to live for, according to her own words. Indeed, I could never understand how Herminia, with her good sense, could have had such implicit faith that her daughter would necessarily be a second Herminia. It almost seemed as if she must have taken heredity for something of known quality and quantity; and, even if that was the case, she entirely overlooked the importance of environment in the formation of the character of children. Environment does not only mean the immediate influence of parents and surroundings at home, but includes everybody and everything that a child comes in contact with and receives impressions from. Herminia had no rational basis for such implicit faith,—none except her own hopes and desires. It really pained me to see her cherish that faith. I remember once telling her that my personal experience, as well as the experience of others, had been that the children of extreme radicals turn out to be conservatives almost always.

Florence. How do you account for it?

Laura. Well, it is perhaps due to the fact that the children of radicals are very often deprived of a good many material comforts and pleasures, and also because, while still very young and consequently very impressionable, they are made to suffer for the "sins" of their parents by other children as well as adults; perhaps these two factors have something to do with the formation of strong prejudices against heresy and nonconformity in general.

Florence. The question, to my mind, is really: what was there left for Herminia to live for, since Alan was dead and Dolores had disappointed her so dreadfully? She certainly could not have done anything for the freedom of women.

Laura. She could have done a good deal, if she had been rational. Had she been less sure that Dolores would necessarily take up her own cause, she would not have been *crushed*, when Dolores proved to have no sympathy at all with her mother's views. No doubt it would have been disappointing and extremely painful to be so cruelly treated by her own child, but she would have been able to take a more philosophical view of the matter, and would not consequently have put an end to her own life. Then, Herminia was a victim of a false philosophy of life. She had old-fashioned altruistic ideas. She believed she had "duties" to her sex. She felt that she must fight a certain "battle," which had been imposed upon her. In fact, she did everything in a spirit of self-sacrifice or martyrdom. Such interpretations of one's impulses to do what is right are always sure to lead to keen disappointments. It does not seem to me that a person starting out in that way can ever accomplish as much as one who rationally interprets his motives. Such people are usually crushed by the unforeseen amount of suffering which they have to endure.

Florence. Tell me just what you mean by "old-fashioned altruistic ideas."

Laura. Under the head of old fashioned altruists come, first, those who believe in a supernatural being imposing upon them duties, and next those who consider self of secondary importance and claim that we live primarily for the happiness of others. When self cries out for one thing, and the happiness of "others" cries for the very opposite thing, it is said to be our duty to sacrifice self. That is what would be called an *absolutely altruistic motive*, which, however, is an impossibility, because it would lead to the destruction of all selves, which means destruction of the very thing that we are said to live for. There is no motive that has no self in it, although not all motives are equally selfish. A woman with rational views might do just what Herminia did,—*i. e.*, if asked to marry a man she loves, she might refuse, not because of her duties to her sex, and so on, but because she desired to avoid marriage laws which she regarded as the cause of slavery of women. Some might go further, as Herminia did, and say: "*I* wish to set an example to women, and show that they can get rid of that slavery, if they really wish. Although I fully realize what a hard task it is, and that it means suffering and struggle, I want to do it." Such action would be regarded as unselfish, but there would clearly be the gratification of self in it. A woman who should set out with such motives would be able to stand more hardship, for there is self there; she would not be crushed so easily, because she would not worry over the fact that she had not performed her duties. If she were compelled to give up this method of protesting against the marriage institution, she could still live and look for other means to further the cause. Such a woman would not at least discourage other women in attempting to follow her steps. She would not give the conservatives warrant to say "that those who violate our laws must die." She would live and fight in spite of the numerous obstacles.

Florence. I am sure that Herminia's followers have enthusiasm and courage enough not to be deterred by anything.

Laura. You never told me plainly that you agreed thoroughly with Herminia, but I have suspected it of late. But, Florence, have you reached the point when you are ready to repeat Herminia's experiment? It would cause me great pain, if that were really the case.

Florence. I have long wished to speak to you about it, for I care more for your opinion than for that of anybody else, Laura! I have considered the subject thoroughly, and, since I have learned what marriage is, from what slavery it sprang, by what unhappy sacrifices it is maintained and made possible, I have felt that I could never marry, no matter how I loved. I feel that I too could give my life as a sacrifice for the freedom of women. I condemn the women who have turned traitors to their sex.

Laura. I see plainly where you stand now. I scarcely hope to make you see the irrationality of such conduct, for, like Herminia, you are of the impulsive variety of women, and never benefit by others' experience. But still I wish to tell you my views on the subject.

Florence. I always try to be reasonable. But I confess that I feel intensely the evil of the marriage institution.

Laura. Why, Florence, every true believer in individual liberty feels that the marriage institution is a relic of slavery, and, as such, must be protested against and denounced, just as we denounce every other institution which violates individual freedom. I have no justification for the existence of the marriage laws, but I insist that every rational person, who has the desire to sacrifice his life as a protest against the marriage institution must think over carefully the following questions: Is the marriage institution the greatest existing evil? Can this question be approached directly, or does it depend on the solution of more fundamental economic and political questions? *Is freedom of women possible without economic independence*, and is economic independence possible under present conditions? Is self-sacrifice of individual women the only, or even the wisest, way to undermine this existing and strongly-supported institution, and have we not sufficient reason to think men will try to enforce the marriage laws as long as they fail to see that individual liberty is the essential condition of real human happiness?

Florence. I remember the time, and that was not so very long ago, when you yourself warmly advocated Herminia's principles, and did not shrink from any practical application of them. It is curious to see how practical you have become!

Laura. I believe more in freedom of women than I ever did before; in this respect I can never change as long as my mental faculties remain unimpaired. But I have become more practical, and I am not ashamed of it. I see more clearly what I then saw only faintly,—that, marriage or no marriage, a woman is not and cannot be *free*, unless she is economically independent. Unless she can provide for her own needs, she is a man's slave in some form or degree (it might be in a very civilized form, by the way), be he her legal or illegal lover or husband. The majority of women are not awakened to the real cause of their slavery. Why do they live a life of legal prostitution? Not from fear of the law, or even of public opinion, but from the instinctive fear of the hard struggle for their own, as well as their children's, material existence. When they are treated brutally by their husbands, they forget the law, they forget public opinion, but they cannot forget the poverty that is in store for them, if they leave the house of their lord and master. Take, for instance, actresses or other independent women; marriage does not enslave them, if they wish to be free, because they are independent materially of their husbands.

Florence I don't see why you talk so much of the importance of economic independence to me, just as if I or Herminia did not realize it?

Laura. No, you do *not* realize it, for a full realization would necessarily make you see that such independence, for a woman who acts out her conviction, is, today, a practical impossibility; that, if a woman lives with a man outside of marriage, especially if she has children, she is lost as far as the possibilities of supporting herself are concerned. The neighbors—in fact, the entire community—take excellent care that she should suffer, for they fear the effect of her example upon their own children, and so she must necessarily fall back for her support on the man she associates with. Think of the prospect to a young, intellectual, ambitious, active woman, with probably a profession she loves, with all the zeal for actual freedom, finding herself in a state of thorough dependence for her own and her child's support, becoming suddenly isolated from the world of her friends, for most of them are usually either conservative or lacking the courage to receive her. To depend on only one person for your companionship, to be left practically with very few or no friends at all, coupled with the possibility of ceasing to love this man, or noticing signs of his indifference,—imagine, if you can, the horror of such a situation! Take Herminia's experience. Could she have gone on teaching school? Was she not obliged to give it up? Was she not deprived thereby of her economic independence? Was she not entirely and wholly dependent on Alan's companionship? Supposing he had lived, he might have proven himself to be an entirely different person, as soon as he realized that he was practically Herminia's master, that she was no longer the respected Miss Barton, who was perfectly independent, who supported herself by teaching school, but Alan Merrick's mistress, who was at his mercy as far as her material and moral support were concerned. He might have been influenced even instinctively by it, as every husband is rightly supposed to be, after the law gives him the mastership over a woman who was once free, and whom he probably even loved. Alan might have then asserted his authority in many things that concerned Herminia, and then what?

Florence. The only thing to do in such a case is to put an end to any relations with such a man.

Laura. To put an end is not so easy, when you think what a desperate struggle Herminia had to make for the very scanty support of herself and Dolores after Alan's death. She who, if married, would have been able to support herself and child in comfort! When you think of the prospect left to a woman under such conditions, you will then realize that the choice is really between two evils,—*i. e.*, poverty, privation, sneers, for herself and young child on the one hand, and submission to her lord on the other. It is very hard to choose under such conditions. To talk about freedom of choice reminds me of the claim of some people that the workingmen are as free as their masters. What are their alternatives? Starvation, or starvation wages. Now and then they get desperate and decide actually to starve; that is the time when they strike, but they usually soon decide (at least, the majority of them do) that starvation wages are, after all, better than no wages at all, because then at least the power to protest is left to you.

Florence. But you must not forget that Alan was a good man; if he had lived, the world would not have triumphed. He certainly would have helped Herminia to accomplish her desired end.

Laura. You don't seem to realize that you too are giving your case away. You practically admit that with him she would have accomplished *everything*, without him *nothing*. What does this mean, but thorough dependence on a man? With Alan, rich, influential, living in splendor, of course Herminia would not have suffered. He would have protected her as

every rich man protects his mistress. She might never have realized how cruel the world is to its heretics. She might have gone on thinking and pitying her sisters who have not the courage to free themselves. But, if the question had been put to her in what way her position was different from the position of every married woman, she would have had great difficulty in answering it. Realizing, as she must have realized on reflection, that her own, as well as her child's, happiness depended entirely on Alan, what freedom of choice would have been left for her? Of course, as long as Herminia only wished to do what Alan happened to approve, there would have been no trouble; but neither is there any trouble among a married couple under such conditions. But was she freer to do things without Alan's consent than any married woman? He might have tyrannized over her at any time he chose. She either would have had to give in to her illegal lord, or else face misery for herself and child. You say that Alan was a good man. I have no doubt of that, but there are some other good men whose sense of justice is strong, who thoroughly believe that men and women have the *same* rights to life and the exercise of their faculties, but those very men, when they marry, differ little, we are told, from other husbands; but, if that is true, the illegal husbands are much more dangerous, because the women are practically more at their mercy. R. S. Y.

Anarchism and the Trade Union.

Since the American Federation of Labor meeting last winter, I have received letters from friends telling me what happened there, and the further they are from Denver, the more they know about it. Thus do we see that distance can lend other things besides enchantment.

The "Arena" correspondent received the news from the convention by psychic telephone. The wires got twisted, and he got everything upside down. And now comes Comrade Simpson, and tells us that hypnotism was the great force at work there. Verily, God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. The people in the Modern Athens seem to think so.

Where is Simpson's proof that I was hypnotized? Or that Gompers was beaten at his own game? What is Gompers's game? And who are the Denver crowd?

Simpson thinks the circumstances surrounding the "Arena" boycott are necessarily unknown to me. May I be permitted to remind him that the distance from Denver to Boston is just as great as the distance from Boston to Denver? So I may know just as much about the "Arena" boycott as he does about the Denver convention.

I know that the editor of the "Arena" is not the most truthful man in the world, but I did believe him when he said his magazine had a large circulation. I still think so. If, however, it is not the case, and I have been silly enough to believe Flower "just once," I will repent and assure my good friend Simpson that it will not happen again.

Many of Simpson's questions are answered when I tell him I am not a strict trade unionist. I know that trade unions have raised the wages of some men in some trades, and have prevented the further decrease of wages in others. How far it is possible to continue this process I don't know.

When I say trade unions are the most thoroughly Anarchistic organizations in our present society, I mean they are more nearly Anarchistic than any other. They are not so because the men who started them believed in freedom, but because the State allies itself with capital in fighting the unions. Thus it happens that, in most of the skirmishes between capital and labor, labor finds itself arrayed against the State.

A voluntary association formed for the mutual benefit of its members, using the boycott and other passive weapons in its fight against capitalism and the State, certainly seems to me very near the Anarchist idea.

When men pledge one another to buy union-made goods and thus mutually strengthen their unions, it is evident that they expect to get as much as they give. It is not a desire to sacrifice, and I never pretended that it was.

The trade unions that have been successful—a result of years of hard work—are now in danger of having their work undone by the State Socialists, who are trying to introduce politics into the unions and ram their doctrines down the throats of the union members, whether they are willing or not. Those unionists who are not ready to jump into heaven *via* the State are dubbed "pure and simple" trade unionists. In defence, they point to the work they have already done when the State Socialists find fault; but, when they (the trade unionists) talk of the future, they are weak, and their answer to the politician is only a negative one.

If these men understood Anarchism and could bring up the positive arguments against authority and restriction, they would make short work of the State Socialists. Besides, the educational work of Anarchism could be done side by side with their regular union work without their hindering each other in the least. Politics, on the other hand, will break up a union in no time.

By showing the "pure and simple" unionist that the voluntary idea is a much more valuable one than even he supposes, and that, in opposing the Statists, he is in the right, much valuable work can be done.

The union I belong to has no qualifications for membership other than that the applicant be of a certain age and working at the trade. The despotic features Simpson sees are entirely lacking. So it must be some other union he had in mind.

I have done much worse than flaunt non-union goods for which "higher wages were paid." Two years ago the Taber Grand Opera House management reduced the wages of its stage hands, the men went on strike, and the Denver Trades Assembly ordered a boycott on that theatre. Some months later the announcement was made that Ibsen's "Ghosts" would be played there. It did not take me long to choose between continuing the boycott and seeing my favorite play; so I suspended the boycotting for one night and saw "Ghosts."

The next morning I told my fellow workmen where I had been. They said that, when it came to a choice between Anarchism and the union, I did not hesitate, and I assured them they were right, and there the matter dropped.

The fight between the Federation and the K. of L. I deplore, and I have no sympathy with it, or with any other squabbles between union men. I don't know the leaders of K. of L.-ism who were defeated at the last Federation convention, although I attended all the sessions. It must have taken place during my hypnotic trance. Perhaps Simpson and Lynch can tell me who those leaders were. Henry Cohen.

Puck Preacheth the Word.

[Puck.]

"*Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink; or in respect for a holyday; or of the new moon; or of the Sabbath days.*"

—Colossians, 2-16.

Dearly beloved, to say that the greater number of you be mulish is to slander a deserving beast of burden. Yet, since the mule is held to be uncommonly stupid and stubborn, it is hard to qualify more fittingly those of you that uphold our so-called Sunday laws. God, in his wisdom, endowed you with reason; and ever since you got it you have judged your fellowman in meat and in drink; in respect for holydays, and of the new moon; and of the Sabbath days. Your wicked passion for shaping your neighbor's morals has been the root of more of the world's evil than all your neighbor's sins. You have been wrong in your interference, and you have been stupid in your way of interfering. In nineteen hundred years you have not learned the simplest lesson that the Galilean fisherman taught,—the lesson of brotherly love and gentleness and charity. If you see your neighbor showing a dangerous fondness for chess or cigarettes or bicycling or beer (that is, a greater fondness than you have for such), you pass a law requiring him to conform in those indulgences to your own ideas of propriety. You have great faith in the virtue of a law. You believe that all people would be moral and upright, if you could only get a law passed requiring it. That is because you are as stupid as a mule would be if he were as stupid as we generally think he is. You worship Law as a high thing, with all power to coerce or to hinder the people. You have lost sight of the central truth about Law: that it is the product of a small number of people who are supposed to voice the wishes of all; and that, however low it may fall, it can rise no higher than its source.

Dear brethren, let me here remind you that spiritual enlightenment never advances except in disobedience of the law. This has always been true, because it is man's way to think he knows it all, and to enact laws forbidding any one to know any more. The man who proved that the earth moves, you will remember, did so in defiance of the law, and was punished for his crime. I do not expect to swerve you from your meddling course by showing you that it has always been unchristian; but I do expect you to reflect seriously when I say that your laws for making other people moral never did any good. Take the man who wishes to buy his beer fresh on Sunday. Suppose his desire *is* sinful; your law restraining him does not make his heart less black, his will less vicious. He lacks the spiritual grace which prompts you to lay in your Sunday beer on Saturday; he also lacks an ice-box and some ice. You try to force him to do your way, but you cannot until he has both the desire and the ice-box, and then he will need no forcing. In the meantime you only bother him, put him to needless expense, and irritate him to foolish excesses. Some of you, my hearers, who are ultra radical, will concede that it may not be sinful to desire as fresh beer on Sunday as on Monday; "yet," you say, "if we let beer be sold on the Sabbath, it will open the way to other commerce." Think a minute, dear people. Do you really believe that it is your law that keeps the Sabbath from becoming a mere week-day of work? Don't you know that Sunday is a day of rest because the people have learned to rest one day in seven? Know, then, that the Sabbath is not only made for man, but it is made by man. He has always moulded it to his will, whether it was a bear-baiting Sabbath or a day of rational rest and enjoyment such as we are getting to have in this country. If the people are temperate and decent, it is because they wish to be so. Your Sunday law never made a man temperate and decent against his will. And yet you proceed as if the spiritual graces could be generated in the breast of man by a tattoo of a policeman's club on his skull. On a broiling hot Sunday, some weeks ago, a certain desperado was caught in the act of selling ice to the criminals that throng the tenement houses of Essex street. Under your law he was cast into a cell. Now, it is true that your law kept those sweltering wretches from pandering to their vicious Sunday appetite for ice, but you neglected to show them that it is sinful to buy ice on Sunday, and so you left them rebellious and contemptuous of you and your law. As a result there are in Essex street, today, hundreds of desperate characters who would, if they could, buy a chunk of ice on the Sabbath with as little compunction as you would take a bottle of beer out of your own ice-box. You and your laws are to blame for this deplorable state of affairs.

There is one of your Sunday laws that is generally respected—and only one. I mean the law that says "stationery, confectionery, drugs, and surgical instruments may be sold *in an orderly manner*." I am reliably informed that, since this law was passed, such a thing as the disorderly sale of drugs and surgical instruments has been unknown. When we remember the wild disorder that marks the sale of these articles on week days, we cannot be too grateful to the framers of that law. After midnight on Saturday you cannot buy a magazine in a riotous manner; no, nor a truss nor a flask of hair-dye. The turbulent druggist has been taught that he must restrain his natural cussedness on the Sabbath. He must sell his soda with gentle dignity, and his liver-pads must be vended with becoming sedateness. Should he sell cough drops or insect-powder under any but the most decorous restraint, he would be jailed. This, dear friends, is the most sensible of all your Sabbath safeguards.

Perhaps some of you are thinking that my knife cuts both ways; that, if public sentiment makes the laws, then it favors our Sunday laws, and therefore they ought to be respected. You are wrong, my hearers. The politicians work the law-making machine to their own ends. They want the votes of you who so abound in grace that you can judge your fellow-men in meat and drink, and they are only too glad to pass the laws you want. Afterwards they sell for cash the right to violate those laws. You it was,

my godly people, who built up the grandest system of blackmail this country has ever known. You held the saloon-keeper while the policeman rifled his pockets. Thus your attempt to judge your neighbor in drink caused all manner of sin and misery; and your neighbor keeps on drinking.

You are shortly to have a chance to vote on whether or not you should have a chance to vote on whether or not you *should* judge your neighbor in drink. The Republican platform promises to maintain your Sunday law. The Democratic platform disguises, as well as language will permit, a leaning toward local option. One of these platforms is hypocritical and has practically been repudiated. The other is a wretched, straddling ambiguity, and yet it is the politician's conception of your attitude on the question. If he finds you approve of it, he will gradually reduce its ambiguity; and, after many years, it may be, we shall stand on as broad a local option platform as that of St. Paul, which I took for my text. Study his words and be wise. PUCK, D. D.

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